

**Raised Bill No. 5322: AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A HUMAN
SERVICES PERMIT AND A REQUIREMENT THAT SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS
CONDUCT HOME VISITS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

Education Committee

Submitted By: Dr. Rafaela Soriano

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to state that I oppose this bill. As a school social worker, and the fact that this bill is proposing that school social workers do two home visits for every student they are serving a year, demonstrates how removed from our work those who are proposing the changes are. I have been working as a school worker for 9 years, and the job gets more challenging every year. The challenges the pandemic has brought have taken a toll not only on children and families, but on mental health professionals as well. I work non-stopping from the moment I walk into the building and work most evenings after my children are asleep. There is no time in my schedule to fit in two home visits per year. I can tell you for sure that it does not impede me to connect and support my students. I barely have enough time to support the students in school. There just is not enough time in a day to accomplish all that I already must do. I often work after hours and never feel like I'm caught up with my work. I believe in trying to help students with the mental health crisis we're facing, we're forgetting that mental health professionals are carrying a huge burden of this crisis too. Adding more to our plate is not the way to go.

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Regarding bachelor level social workers, I cannot stress enough how unprepared they would be. I have professionals from other fields consulting with me when it comes to the challenges that the families we have face. I can imagine that a bachelor level social worker will not have the training and preparation to handle the challenges I face.

Again, I cannot stress enough my opposition to this bill.

Thank you,
Rafaela Soriano